

ACBL Tournament Jargon

ACBL Tournament Categories:

Sectional

- Each ACBL Unit can sponsor at least one sectional tournament per year. This means there are many close to home.
- Silver points are awarded.
- STAC (Sectional Tournament at Clubs) is a club game that awarding silver points.

Regional

- Each ACBL district can sponsor one or more per year (our District (13) has four).
- Red and Gold points are awarded.

National

- 3 NABCs (North American Bridge Championship) per year
- Red, Gold and Platinum points are awarded.
- At high level national competitions
 - Some games are open to everyone. Pay your money and you can play against people you read about in the Bridge Bulletin.
 - Some games are by qualification only. (RedRibbon/BlueRibbon/ SilverRibbon)
- Regionally rated events at Nationals: Essentially a big regional tournament at the national! Red and Gold points are awarded.

Adjectives for Events:

Stratified : Everyone plays together, but to determine winners, your score is compared only to others in your strata – A, B, or C. The master point range for each stratum depends on the tournament: Nationals and Regionals have higher limits for C and B than Sectionals do.

Flighted: Players are divided into flights and each flight is treated as a separate event. Flights are typically restricted by maximum master points and those who qualify for multiple flights may choose which flight to play in. Flight A/X is confined to people with a high number of master points (usually more than 3000) and/or those that want the challenge of playing against them.

Strati-flighted: A combination of Stratified and Flighted. Each flight is divided into strata. Some of our weekly club games are strati-flighted. Two flights: Open and 499er and 3 strata per flight.

Bracketed: Play is divided into brackets depend on the number of players who enter and the teams' master point total.

- Once you are assigned to a bracket, you play against only teams in your bracket, i.e. against teams with points comparable to your team's points.
- If many teams enter, there will be many brackets and the master point ranges will be narrow. If few teams enter, there will be fewer brackets, with wider master point ranges. In that case, handicaps may be awarded to try to "level the playing field."
- Awards vary – bracket 1 awards the most master points, with awards decreasing as the bracket number increases. If there are 5 brackets, bracket 5 (for teams with the fewest master points) are awarded the fewest master points, and the award may be half red, half gold.

Types of Events

Open pairs: All tournaments hold one or more open-pair events.

- Some common types:
 - Stratified or Strati-flighted: Everyone is competing for master points against pairs with similar master points.
 - Play Through: you are expected to play in 2 sessions.
- Gold points are awarded at regionals and nationals for overall winners as well as section 1st places.

Swiss Team: A team of 4 (or 5 or 6) play 5 to 9 boards against another team.

- Scoring:
 - At the end of the match: Compare how your team did on each board with how the other team did.
 - Convert differences into IMPs (International Matchpoints defined below)
 - Convert Total IMP score to a 20 or 30 Victory Point scale. (The use of Victory Points gives each team a current running score.)
- If you win your flight in a Regional/National A, AX, or B stratum you are awarded gold points.

Knock Out: Instead of playing in all rounds of the event, you play until you are beaten; i.e. get knocked out.

- Held at National, Regional and some Sectional tournaments.
- You generally play 24 boards against one team or if a round robin: You play 12 boards against two teams.
- The brackets are designed so that an overall winner will be chosen after 3 or 4 sessions.
- A variation is the Compact Knockouts: Usually two 12 board matches in one session and the winners advancing to the second session.
- Knockouts are a very popular event. Gold points are awarded if you win 2 rounds playing in regionally-rated knockout events at Regional and NABC's.

Board a Match (BAM)

- A team game that moves like a pairs game. During the event, your N/S will play the same boards against an E/W pair that your E/W played against the other N/S pair.
- You either win or lose a board, but the score difference is immaterial. The team that wins the most boards is the winner (gold points at a National or Regional)

Barometer

- Everyone plays the same board at the same time, so you know how you are doing as you go. Common at Sectionals

Gold Rush Pairs:

- Limited to players with 750 or fewer master points: Two stratum with upper limits of 300 and 750. Gold points are awarded for winning overall and for section winners in the 750 strata.
- Available only at Nationals and Regionals.

Side Games:

- Single session pair events at Regionals and Nationals: Morning, afternoon and evening.
- If you win a side game and play in one other similar game (morning, afternoon, or night), gold points are awarded. Otherwise your award are red points.

Scoring systems

Matchpoints: A method of scoring individual hands in pairs events. You compare your score with the score of all of the other pairs (who played in your direction). You earn $\frac{1}{2}$ matchpoint for each pair whose score you tie, and 1 matchpoint for each pair whose score you beat. For example, say you are sitting N/S in a club game with 9 tables. Each board is played 9 times. If your score beats all 8 of the other N/pairs' scores, you earn 8 matchpoints. If everyone earned the same score on a hand, everyone earns 4 matchpoints (because everyone tied with 8 other N/S pairs). If you beat all other N/S pairs except one pair, whose score is the same as yours, then your score is $7\frac{1}{2}$ ("tied for top").

International Matchpoints (IMPs): A scoring system used for team events. A difference in raw bridge scores is converted into a scoring system that gives fairer comparisons. The IMP scale is printed on the ACBL convention card.

Masterpoints

To earn your Life master ranking: 500 masterpoints including 50 black, 50 silver, 50 red, 25 gold and/or platinum

- **“Unpigmented”** points awarded for on-line ACBL-sanctioned games
- **Black** points are awarded only at ACBL-sanctioned club games.
- **Silver** points are awarded at sectionally rated tournaments and at STaC club games.
- **Red** points are awarded at regional tournaments, special ACBL club events
- **Gold** points are awarded at regional tournaments, NABC regional events and special ACBL-wide charity club games.
- **Platinum** points are awarded ONLY at NABC National events